REMARKS

This application, for which an accompanying Request For Continued Examination has been filed, has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 6, 2004. Claims 1 to 5, 7 to 15 and 17 to 23 are in the application, of which Claims 1, 10 and 17 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Initially, Claims 10 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. The Office Action contends that Claims 10 and 17 recite that the appearance of the approval processing window and that of the rejection processing window occur at the same time, and further contends that the specification teaches that these events are mutually exclusive. However, as recited by the claims, the approval processing window and the rejection processing window appear in response to the selection of a selection approval button or the selection of a selection reject button, respectively. As such, the claims are seen to recite that the two windows appear when their associated buttons are selected, which is perfectly consistent with and supported by the specification. Accordingly, Claims 10 and 17 are believed to comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, and as such, reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 112, first paragraph rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 7, 10, 17, 20 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,361,199 (Shoquist) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,385,475 (Sudman). Claims 2, 3, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Shoquist in view of

Sudman, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,500,513 (Langhans). Claims 2 to 5, 8, 9 and 12 to 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Shoquist in view of Sudman, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,970,475 (Barnes). Claims 18, 19, 21 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Shoquist in view of Sudman, and further in view of Catalog Age "Insight aims for 1-to-1 via e-mail" (Catalog Age). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention relates to approving purchase requests of desired articles which are stored in a database in advance. The present invention includes a list window through which an approver is able to view a list of articles that have been requested for approval. In addition, the list window includes a selection approval button and a selection rejection button.

In the instance that the approver wants to reject purchase of a certain article, the approver can select that article and then select the selection rejection button. This causes a rejection processing window to appear. The rejection processing window contains a rejection button, a rejection cancel button, and the selected article. By selecting the rejecting cancel button, the rejection processing of the selected article is cancelled. By selecting the rejection button, however, the status of the selected article is updated in a database as a rejected article. In addition, selection of the rejection button causes an e-mail to be sent to the client who requested approval of the article in order to notify that client of the rejection. In this way, the rejection processing window allows the approver to confirm that selected article is one that is to be rejected, and to notify the client of the rejection.

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In the instance that the approver wants to approve purchase of a certain article, the approver can select that article and then select the selection approval button. This causes an approval processing window to appear. The approval processing window contains an approval button, an approval cancel button, and the selected article. By selecting the approval cancel button, the approval processing of the selected article is cancelled. By selecting the approval button, however, the status of the selected article is updated in a database as an approved article and the selected article is deleted from the list of articles in the list window. In addition, selection of the approval button causes an e-mail to be sent to the client who requested approval of the article in order to notify that client of the approval. In this way, the approval processing window allows the approver to confirm that selected article is one that is to be approved, and notify the client of the approval. Also, since the selected article is deleted from the list window once it is approved in the approving processing window, the approver is able to quickly identify which articles have yet to be approved.

With specific reference to the claims, independent Claim 1 recites a purchase request approving apparatus capable of approving a purchase request of a desired article stored in a database in advance. The purchase request approving apparatus includes a display means for displaying a list window, wherein the list window contains a list of articles for which approval has been requested, a selection approval button to display an approval processing window, and a selection reject button to display a rejection processing window. The purchase request approving apparatus also includes a selecting means for selecting an article, in accordance with a user operation, from the articles displayed in the

list window. The purchase request approving apparatus further includes a display control

means for executing appearance of an approval processing window in response to selection

of the selection approval button, and for executing appearance of a rejection processing

window in response to selection of the selection reject button, wherein the approval

processing window has an approval button to perform approval of the selected article, an

approval cancel button to cancel approval processing of the selected article, and the

selected article, and wherein the rejection processing window has a reject button to perform

rejection of the selected article, a reject cancel button to cancel rejection processing of the

selected article, and the selected article.

The purchase request approving apparatus also includes a purchase

approving means for updating status of the selected article as an approved article in the

database, for deleting the selected article from the list in the list window, and for sending

an e-mail to a client which has requested an approval of the selected article to notify the

client of the approval of the article, wherein the purchase approving means operates in

response to selecting the approval button in the approval processing window. The

purchase request approving apparatus further includes a purchase rejection means for

updating status of the selected article as a rejected article in the database and for sending e-

mail to a client which has requested for an approval of the selected article to notify of the

rejection of the article, wherein the purchase rejection means operates in response to

selecting the reject button in the rejection processing window.

Independent Claims 10 and 17 are method and computer medium claims,

respectively, that correspond generally to the apparatus of independent Claim 1.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claims 1, 10 and 17, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of (1) updating status of the selected article as an approved article in the database, deleting the selected article from the list in the list window, and sending an e-mail to a client which has requested an approval of the selected article to notify the client of the approval of the article in response to selecting the approval button in the approval processing window, and (2) updating status of the selected article as a rejected article in the database and sending e-mail to a client which has requested for an approval of the selected article to notify of the rejection of the article in response to selecting the reject button in the rejection processing window.

Shoquist relates to an automated procurement system with multi-system data access. With respect to the above-mentioned features, the Office Action contends that Shoquist teaches a display menus which includes menu selections for approval and rejection actions (Figs. 12B and 18A), and also contends that Shoquist contemplates the use of multiple display windows. Figure 12B is seen to illustrate action menus for a request for purchase (RP) work list (column 7, lines 7-16), and Figure 18A is seen to illustrate action menus for purchase order (PO) work lists (column 7, lines 47-52).

However, no action menu of Figure 12B or Figure 18A is seen to perform all the functions of (1) updating status of the selected article as an approved article in the database, deleting the selected article from the list in the list window, and sending an e-mail to a client which has requested an approval of the selected article to notify the client of the approval of the article in response to selecting the approval button in the approval

processing window; or (2) updating status of the selected article as a rejected article in the database and sending e-mail to a client which has requested for an approval of the selected article to notify of the rejection of the article in response to selecting the reject button in the rejection processing window.

The remaining art applied against the claims, namely Sudman, Langhans, Barnes, and Catalog Age, is not seen to supply what is missing from Shoquist. Accordingly, based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, independent Claims 1, 10 and 17 are believed to allowable over the applied references.
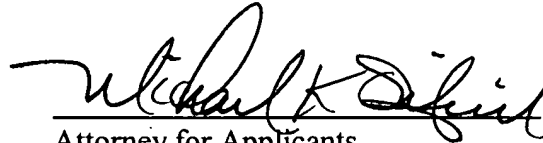
The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims and are believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

Finally, an interview is requested with the Examiner in order to discuss the foregoing amendments and remarks. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned representatives when he receives the amendment in order to schedule the interview.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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